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Press Release

Rebecca Ness *Threads*

30 August - 24 September 2022

Hosted by EDIT, Seoul, Korea

52, Hoenamu-ro 44-gil, Yongsan-gu, Seoul 04346



Galerie Marguo is pleased to present *Threads*, a solo presentation of recent works by American artist Rebecca Ness in Seoul, Korea during the week of the first edition of Frieze Seoul. Hosted by Korean gallery EDIT and on view through 24 September, this pop-up exhibition marks the artist's first exhibition in Korea.

Almost exactly one year after her first solo exhibition *Stepping Out* with Marguo, Ness considers her new exhibition as a kind of *cheshbon hanefesh*, or 'taking inventory of the soul', a practice that the artist relates to her Jewish upbringing. Regarding her show in Seoul as an account of the past year, the artist engages the viewer by drawing them into the intertwined fabric of her creative life.

Comprising three large-scale oils on linen and three small gouaches on paper, the exhibition is titled *Threads* as, in the words of the artist, each work of the show gives 'little clues to how narratives are all connected'. By embedding discarded sketches and paintings that match other paintings in the show, Ness reveals in *Summer Studio* (2022) how she looks back at her works and how she 'sees' herself as an artist.

Ness worked simultaneously on all three oil paintings, as the ideas came to her all at once. The centerpiece of the show, *Summer Studio* (2022), serves as a time capsule that catalogs different aspects of Ness' creative process in her studio, depicting her artist-self in a very upfront, almost naked, and extremely vulnerable way. For Ness, the vulnerability and the idea of 'regeneration of self' is the overarching narrative that threads together all the works presented. The idea that summer is the time of rejuvenation becomes even more central in *Rest* (2022), where the artist plays on the idea of ambiguity, as she paints the bird in a flux of death and sleep.

Best understood as a 'romantic historian'¹, Ness excels in transcribing her imagined world and monumentalizing the mundane. Recurring elements like the bird, the self-portrait and the intimate scenes take and pull from each other like threads, which is why it's essential for the artist to preserve the interconnectedness in her works. 'I can't finish one painting without the other. That's always been how I work,' said Ness. Sketches and other paintings for the exhibition are rendered painstakingly in *Summer Studio* (2022) where the artist examines her artistic philosophy and her works by cross-referencing the different tangents and narratives within narratives. The result is a dynamism that verges on cartoonish and is soaked with vitality, just like everything that Ness sets her eyes and hands on, as an artist and as a storyteller.

The duality of the concept of *Threads* reconciles Ness' relationship with time and space. Behind the strata of experiences and collapsed time recorded by the space of the canvas, Ness pumps life into the narratives by going constantly in and out of different pictorial spaces and connects all the temporalities. She thinks of her works as theatrical plays that unite time, space, and characters. Her studio, as the physical and mental space where she threads together scenes and emotions, allows her to take inventory of her past relationships and experiences and to step out of herself, to paint herself in an aspirational way of what she thinks she's working towards.

¹ Morgan Aguiar-Lucander (curator), *Rebecca Ness: Pieces of Mind* (Exhibition catalog, Nino Mier Gallery, 2020), 43.

About the Artist

Rebecca Ness (b.1992, Salem, Massachusetts) holds a BFA in Painting with a minor in History of Art and Architecture from Boston University, and an MFA in Painting and Printmaking from Yale University. She has exhibited widely across the United States and in Europe. Recent solo exhibitions include: 'Studio Visitor', Morgan Presents (New York, 2022); 'Stepping Out', Galerie Marguo (Paris, 2021); 'Windows and Worlds', Carl Kostyal Gallery (London, 2021); 'Pieces of Mind', Nino Mier Gallery (Los Angeles, 2020); 'Twice Over', 1969 Gallery (New York, 2019); and 'Buttoned Down', Yale Slifka Center for Jewish Life (New Haven, 2018). Select recent group exhibitions include: 'Reflections on Perception' Akron Art Museum (Akron, 2022), 'do-mes-tic-i-ty', Nassima Landau (Tel Aviv, 2022), 'The Natural World', Alexander Berggruen Gallery (New York, 2022), 'Mother and Child', Friends Indeed (San Francisco, 2021), '36 Paintings', Harper Books (The Hamptons, 2021), 11, Anton Kern Gallery (New York, 2021); 'Show Me the Signs', Blum & Poe (Los Angeles, 2020); and 'Katherine Bradford, Hulda Guzman, Rebecca Ness', Alexander Berggruen Gallery (New York, 2020).

Ness' work is included in the permanent collections of the Institute of Contemporary Art Miami, FL; the Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, CT; the Kistefos Museum, Jevnaker, Norway; the Long Museum, Shanghai, China; the M Art Foundation, Shanghai, China; and the High Museum of Art, Atlanta, GA. She is the recipient of several awards and grants such as the Jane Chermayeff Scholarship, from The New York Studio School, the Karin and Melvin Johnson Scholarship from the Chautauqua Institution, the Constantin Alajalov Scholarship from Boston University, and the Wilhelmina Denning Jackson Scholarship for the Arts and the National Multiple Sclerosis Society Scholarship.

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Rebecca Ness
Summer Studio, 2022
Oil on linen
228.6 x 152.4 cm